



STATE OF MISSOURI ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY

POLICY TITLE: Report to Commissioner of Administration From Task Force on State Travel Regulations	AUTHORIZED BY:
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ISSUED: February 2002	REVISED:

NOTE: The recommendations to the State Travel Regulations will take effect July 2002 upon adoption through the rulemaking process; a travel policy will subsequently be issued.

Summary

The Travel Regulations Task Force recommends the following:

1. Establish reduced fare airline contracts
2. Retain the current "actual and reasonable" criteria for meal reimbursements
3. Permit meal reimbursements only when an employee is in a continuous 12 hour or longer travel status

Task Force Review

An inter-agency task force consisting of representatives from executive departments, the judiciary and elected officials was convened to review State Audit Report 2001-95, State Departments' Travel Regulations, Procedures and Policies and make recommendations for changes in State Travel Regulations.

Airline Contracts

Regarding State Auditor Recommendations 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3, the task force agreed that the establishment of a state contract for reduced airfares would be advantageous to the State. In addition, the contract should provide for allowance of direct flights in order that an employee's time can be utilized to the maximum extent possible.

The recommended contract will provide for the capture of frequent flyer miles by the directing agencies rather than by individual employees. In the interim, the task force agencies are to enroll in frequent flier programs and begin capturing the credit with those airlines that permit corporate accounts. Since airline fare can be direct billed, this would allow capture of the miles now. Also, both the travel card and procurement card contracts allow establishment of billing accounts for airline charges. These accounts can also be used to capture frequent flier miles.



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Meal Allowance Rates

In reviewing State Auditor Recommendations 2.1 and 2.2, the task force recommends retaining the current actual and reasonable standard for meal reimbursements. While it is theoretically possible for agencies to reimburse up to \$72 a day for meals, the report's data showed this was not happening. The audit report found that meal costs currently average less than \$10 per meal. This did not indicate an overall cost control problem to the task force.

The task force does recommend that annually the Financial Management Advisory Committee discusses "reasonableness" guidelines for meal costs.

The task force agreed to establish single department-wide travel policies.

Noontime Meals

The task force agreed with the State Auditor Recommendations 3.1 and 3.2. They recommend that a 12 hour continuous travel status rule be established to qualify for meal reimbursements. This is a long standing federal guideline used by GSA and other federal agencies. Meals reimbursed under a 12 hour travel status requirement would not be taxable income.

Commissioner's Response to Task Force Recommendation

The Commissioner of Administration may grant an exception to this rule so long as proper Internal Revenue Service conditions are met.

Other

The task force also recommends a change in the regulation regarding travel by auto in lieu of air. The proposed change would allow reimbursement of mileage and other expenses if they would have been incurred for air travel. The current regulation only permits mileage reimbursement. Both the current regulation and the proposed change would cap reimbursement at the coach airfare.